

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-10 without prejudice. Please add new claims 11-20 as follows:

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11. (New) A method for switching AC power flow through and deriving a supply of DC power from one side of an AC power circuit, comprising the steps of:
- a) providing a gate-enabled thyristor for controlling switching of AC power flow through the circuit;
 - b) alternately, (i) enabling the thyristor into an ON state by providing a gate current pulse any time after the instantaneous voltage across the thyristor exceeds a predetermined minimum level, and (ii) maintaining the thyristor in an OFF state by not providing gate current pulse thereto; and
 - c) deriving a source of DC power from said AC power flow every half cycle or full cycle which appears across the thyristor in each of the ON and OFF states thereof.
12. (New) An electrical current control apparatus for operatively interconnecting a source of AC current and an AC load, comprising:
- a) a thyristor having first and second leads coupled between said source and said AC load, wherein said thyristor is connected in said first lead so as to permit flow of AC current through said first lead in response to activation of said thyristor by a gate current pulse, said thyristor being configured to remain actuated after termination of said gate current pulse so long as a predetermined minimum current is flowing through said first lead;
 - b) a driver for selectively initiating or not initiating said gate current pulse to said thyristor at any time after the instantaneous voltage across said thyristor exceeds a

predetermined minimum level during each half cycle of said AC current, said driver for initiating or not initiating said pulse being connected to said first lead in parallel with said thyristor, so that said pulse if initiated is terminated by actuation of said thyristor and the remainder of said half cycle of said AC current flows through said thyristor and said thyristor remains actuated until said AC current drops below the thyristor threshold level at the end of said half cycle;

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- c) power conversion means coupled between the first and second leads and effective for adapting a portion of AC current at the beginning of each half cycle thereof into a source of DC current; and
 - d) control means powered by said DC current for selectively actuating said driver so as to supply or not supply said gate current pulses to said thyristor.

13. (New) The control apparatus of claim 12, wherein said control means comprises a programmable microcontroller.

14. (New) The control apparatus of claim 12, wherein said power conversion means comprises means for diverting a portion of said AC current at the beginning of each cycle of said AC current during the time when the instantaneous voltage across the thyristor is below the predetermined minimum level and adapting said portion of said AC current to said DC current power supply.

15. (New) An apparatus for selectively energizing an AC electrical load from one side of AC power circuit, comprising:

- a) a thyristor coupled between first lead and second AC current leads for controlling a flow of AC line current from said thyristor to said AC electrical load;
- b) a microcontroller which is programmed to selectively provide or not provide enabling gate current pulses to said thyristor; and
- c) a DC power supply coupled with said thyristor and effective to derive electrical power for said microcontroller from every half cycle or full cycle of said AC current.

16. (New) An apparatus for energizing an AC electrical load, comprising:

- a) a thyristor coupled between first and second AC current leads for controlling a flow of AC line current from said thyristor to said AC electrical load;
- b) a zero crossing detector for detecting zero crossings of a sinusoidal waveform of said AC line current;
- c) a microcontroller which is programmed to selectively provide or not provide a gate current pulse to said thyristor in response to detector detecting a zero crossing; and
- d) a DC power supply derived from said AC power flow every half cycle or full cycle which appears across the thyristor in each of the ON and OFF states thereof for providing power to said microcontroller.

17. (New) An apparatus for selectively energizing a high-voltage AC electrical load, comprising:

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- a) a switch housing mountable within the interior of dwelling;
 - b) a switch mounted to said housing having an "off" position, an "on" position, and a "mode" position;
 - c) means responsive to selection of said "off" position for interrupting flow of AC current to said load;
 - d) means responsive to selection of said "on" position for completing said circuit as to provide continuous flow of current to said load;
 - e) a microcontroller mounted in said switch housing; and
 - f) means responsive to selection of said "mode" position for completing and interrupting said circuit so as to permit flow of current through said leads so that said AC electrical load is energized and de-energized in accordance with a predetermined sequence which is programmed into said microcontroller.

18. (New) The apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said microcontroller is programmed to turn said AC load ON and OFF at long, random-time intervals.

19. (New) The apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said microcontroller is programmed to turn AC load ON and DIM at a periodic rate.

20. (New) The apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said microcontroller is programmed to turn AC load ON for predetermined interval of time and then OFF thereafter.